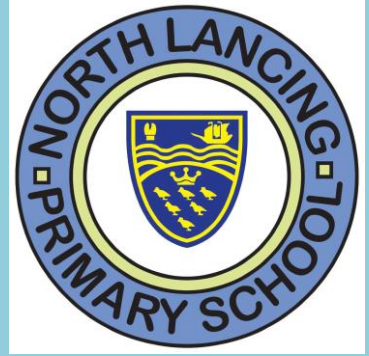


# **NORTH LANCING PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **Attendance Policy**

To be reviewed annually



# North Lancing Primary School

## Attendance Policy

### Introduction from the Adur Family of Schools

As a locality group of schools we acknowledge the considerable effect good attendance and punctuality has on a child's learning and their educational outcomes. We follow government and OFSTED guidelines regarding attendance.

All the Adur schools agree to:

- Promote high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Work in partnership with Parents
- Have clear procedures for dealing with pupil absence
- Have rigorous systems for safeguarding pupils through absence checking procedures.

The above statement has been formulated by all schools within the Adur Family of Schools:

Shoreham Academy, Sir Robert Woodard Academy, Buckingham Primary, Eastbrook Academy, Glebe Primary, The Globe Primary, Herons Dale Primary School, Holmbush Primary, North Lancing Primary, Shoreham Beach Primary, Sompting Village Primary, St. Nicolas and St. Mary's Primary, St. Peter's Primary and Swiss Gardens Primary.

### Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

This policy has been devised in consultation with Staff, Governors, Children and Parents.

## **Being at school**

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

## **Expectations**

### **We expect that all pupils will:**

- attend school every day
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance.

### **We expect that all parents/carers will:**

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school **daily** of absence or if known in advance.
- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

### **We expect that the school will:**

- provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- provide a safe learning environment.
- provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.

- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils.
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Welfare. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Education Welfare may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.
- Will notify the Local education Authority (LEA) after 15 days sickness.
- Will notify EWO after 10 days unexplained absence.

### **Registers, Punctuality and Lateness**

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For school pupils the main playground is supervised from 8.35am and the school doors are open.

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. Registration takes place at 8.45am in upper school and 8.50am in lower school; pupils who arrive after these times will be recorded as late to school.

Registers close at 9.15am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority. Afternoon registration is taken at 12.50pm in lower school and 1.20pm in upper school. Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with by school and may be referred to Education Welfare.

Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

## Pupil Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- parents are requested to **confirm in writing**, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.
- pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
- if a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.*

## Leave of Absence

The school holiday dates and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during these assessment periods even in exceptional circumstances. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations, holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- in **exceptional circumstances** permission may be granted for a maximum of five days of leave providing your child has a good (95% or higher) attendance record over the previous three terms.
- where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year.
- if leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare may well be notified.

## **Penalty Notices**

Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised leave and may also be issued when a pupil is stopped by Truancy Patrol or if a parent / carer fails to ensure regular school attendance.

## **Penalty Notices for Holidays**

Holidays in term time will not be authorised by the school and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

In line with the amendments made to The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 please note the following:

- The Headteacher can now request that the local authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents, when pupils are taken out of school for 5 or more day's holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation.
- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.
- If prosecuted, a fine of up to £2,500 could be issued, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court also gives a Parenting Order.
- Penalty notices are issued to **each** parent, for each child.
- Should the period of absence for a holiday in term time be 15 school days or more, a FPN may not be deemed suitable. Instead the matter may be brought directly before the Court.

Education Welfare can also investigate legal proceeding against parents under section 444 Education Act 1996 or apply to family proceeding court for an ESO to secure regular attendance.

## **Failure to ensure regular school attendance**

North Lancing Primary School hold regular attendance panels in conjunction with the EWO, any parents whose children are identified as a cause for concern will be invited to attend. If there is no improvement in school attendance, the matter will be referred to the Pupil Entitlement Investigation team (PEI) who work in partnership with school and parents in support of pupils who are failing to attend school on a regular basis.

Pupil Entitlement Investigation team may also issue a Penalty Notice to parent / carers who are failing to secure their Childs regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive

measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or the Pupil Entitlement Investigation team. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

### **Changing Schools**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform North Lancing Primary School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate
- Confirmation from admissions

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority Pupil Entitlement Investigation team.

### **Examples of when leave of absence may be authorised:**

- genuine illness of the pupil;
- hospital/dental/doctors appointment for the pupil;
- major religious observances;
- visits to prospective new schools;
- external exams or educational assessments.

### **Examples of unauthorised leave of absence:**

- shopping /day trip/theme park visit/birthday treat;
- holiday;
- oversleeping due to a late night;
- looking after other children / other family member;
- appointments for other family members.

### **Pupil Entitlement Investigation Team (PEI) contact details:**

pei@westsussex.gov.uk      Tel: 033 022 28200